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INL Nuclear Space director to head American Nuclear Society

Harold McFarlane, director of Space Nuclear Systems and Technology Division at Idaho National Laboratory (INL), will begin his tenure as president of the American Nuclear Society (ANS) in June. While maintaining his duties at INL, McFarlane will lead the 10,000-member international organization of engineers, scientists and educators for the next year.

McFarlane has been at the Idaho lab for more than 30 years. In addition to Space Nuclear Systems and Technology Division director, he is deputy associate laboratory director for Nuclear Programs. As the president of ANS, McFarlane will head the organization in unifying the professional activities within the diverse fields of nuclear science and technology. He has served the past year as ANS vice president.

"The ANS is administered by a professional staff headquartered in LaGrange Park, Illinois. However, much of the technical work is accomplished by volunteers who organize meetings, develop nuclear standards, conduct peer reviews, etc. The board of directors sets policy and develops strategies for the society," said McFarlane.

"But the president has the best job," added McFarlane. "He is the face of the society to many organizations – giving him the opportunity to meet fascinating people from around the globe while spreading the nuclear message. He also has the pleasure of presiding at many happy occasions such as bestowing honors and awards."

Each year the ANS president selects a colleague to assist him or her in staffing the various committees with nuclear professionals from across the U.S. and implementing a strategic plan to further the ANS mission. McFarlane selected Hans Gougar, INL Fission and Fusion Systems Department manager, to fill this role.

"When the elected president of ANS comes and asks you to give him a hand during his tenure, it's an honor. There are a lot of people around here (INL) who could do a very good job with this and I'm flattered that he had confidence in me to make that request," said Gougar.

ANS nominates two candidates for the position of president each year. Chosen last year as vice president-president elect, McFarlane will begin his tenure June 8.

The ANS is a not-for-profit, international scientific and educational organization. Dec. 11, 1954, marked the society's historic beginning at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C. ANS has since developed a multifarious membership composed of approximately 10,500 engineers, scientists, administrators, students and educators representing over 1,600 corporations, educational institutions and government agencies.

The mission of the ANS is to serve its members in their efforts to develop and safely apply nuclear science and technology for public benefit through knowledge exchange, professional development, and enhanced public understanding.

When asked about what else he planned to do in the next year, McFarlane laughs, "Just trying to keep my day job is about all I'll be able to do," he says.

McFarlane received his doctorate degree in engineering science from the California Institute of Technology in 1971. He graduated magna cum laude in physics from the University of Texas in 1967 and earned a master's of business administration with honors from the University of Chicago in 2000. His first nuclear engineering class was the one he taught during his brief stint on the faculty at New York University before joining the Idaho lab in 1972.

INL is the U.S. Department of Energy's lead nuclear energy research, development and demonstration laboratory. INL conducts programs in energy research and development, national and homeland security, science and environmental research. INL is managed by Battelle Energy Alliance.

-INL- 06 – 018-

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